CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

It is a commonly received opinion, that the present mode of existence is a state of *probation*, and not of *retribution*, designed, not as a place for equitably administering the principles of justice in rewards and punishments, but as a mode of being preparatory for another in forming characters of virtue or vice, for happiness or misery. Hence, when the day of *probation and opportunity* is closed, it is supposed there will be a day of *reckoning*, when all the secret thoughts, actions, and intentions of men, will be duly examined and carefully scrutinized, and when justice, inflexible, unbending justice, in the execution of judgment and righteousness, will apportion to *each* his due, according to his deeds. It is also supposed, that this Court of Inquest, and the determining of the destinies of finite mortals, will take place at the dissolution of the material world, when all the elements, and all that is therein shall be consumed with the spirit of burning. Connecting the conflagration and destruction of the Universe with a *general judgment*, and associating with these, the idea of man's eternal doom, a subject is formed on which the poet may develope his genius and luxuriant fancy. All that is majestic, awful, and sublime, may be here concentrated to inspire the muse, to take her loftiest flights in airy fields of conjecture, and exhibit her fairest specimens of poetical pencilling; and often has the mind of man indulged itself in speculations on this awfully magnificent theme. The following is a specimen of the latitude given to the imagination, when revelling in this wide field of fancy, extracted from 'YOUNG'S *Last Day*,' which, with the exception of "Milton's Paradise Lost," stands unrivalled for majesty and grandeur of description, among the productions of antiquity and modern times.

"Ye sublunary worlds! awake, awake!
Ye rulers of the nations hear and shake,
Thick clouds of darkness shall arise on day,
In sudden night all earth's dominions lay,
Impetuous winds the scattered forests rend,
Eternal mountains like their cedars bend,
The vallies yawn, the troubled ocean's roar,
And break the bondage of their wonted shore,
A sanguine stain the silver moon o'erspread,
Darkness the circle of the sun invade.
From inmost heaven incessant thunders roll,
And the strong echo bound from pole to pole.
When lo! a mighty trump, one half concealed
In clouds, one half to mortal eye revealed,
Shall pour a dreadful note, the piercing call,
Shall rattle in the centre of the ball.
The expanded circuit of creation shake,
The living die with *fear*, the *dead* awake.
* * * * * * * * *
Again, the trumpet's intermitted sound,
Rolls the wide circuit of creation round,
An universal concourse to prepare,
Of all that ever breathed the vital air;
In some wide field which active whirlwinds sweep,
Drive cities, forests, mountains, to the deep.
To smooth and lengthen out the unbounded space,
And spread an AREA for all human race.
This echoing voice now rends the yielding air,
"For *judgment*, JUDGMENT, sons of men prepare!!"
Earth shakes anew, I hear her groans profound,
And HELL through all her trembling realms resound—
* * * * The judge on high
Looks round and with his glory fills the sky,
Then on the fatal book his hand he lays,
Which high to view supporting seraphs raise;
In solemn form the rituals are prepared,
The seal is broken; and a *groan* is heard.
See on the left, (for by the great command,
The throng divided fall on either hand;)
How weak, how pale, how haggard, how obscene,
What more than death, in every face and mien!
With what distress and glarings of affright,
They shock the heart and turn away the sight;
In gloomy orbs their trembling eyeballs roll,
And tell the horrid secrets of the soul;
Each gesture mourns, each look is black with care,
And every groan is loaden with despair;
Horrors beneath, darkness in darkness, hell
Of hell, where torment behind torment dwell.
A furnace formidable, deep, and wide,
O'er boiling with a mad sulphureous tide,
Expands its jaws, most dreadful to survey,
And roars outrageous for the destined prey.
The sons of light, scarce unappalled look down,
And nearer press Heaven's everlasting throne.
Such is the scene! and one short moments' space,
Concludes the hopes and fears of Adam's race!!!
Proceed who dares, I tremble as I write,
The whole creation swims before my sight,
I faint, my tardy blood forgets to flow,
My soul recoils at this stupendous woe."

Such is the vivid description the Poet gives of the supposed *day of judgment*, and it is needless for me to attempt to exhibit a detailed account of the awful effects such appeals to the passions occasion among the *timid*, when such pictures of fancy are supposed to be founded in *reality*. The numerous instances of insanity and suicide produced thereby, speak more than language can express. My only object in this communication is to present some reasons why I cannot subscribe to the popular doctrine of a *future judgment*.

1*st*. *Allowing that mankind are to be rewarded in another world for the deeds performed in the body, a future, general judgment is useless!*

It is almost universally maintained by all *partialists*, that the destinies of men are fixed on their departure from earth, and that they immediately enter on a state of *retribution* on exchanging worlds—as expressed in the couplet,

"To Heaven or Hell my soul must fly,
As in a moment when I die."

This presupposes that *judgment* is rendered by the great judge, as soon as the spirit wings its way to another world. And with what propriety is another day of trial instituted? Is there an opportunity for repealing the decisions of the Most High? Can there possibly have been a mistake in the *first judgment rendered*, that another formal examination should be required? The Omniscience of the Almighty forbids the thought. And if the fates of all human kind are fixed at death so irrevocably, that they cannot be changed or reversed, a *day* of *judgment*, at the end of time, for a reconsideration of the matter is entirely groundless. Besides, the infinite knowledge of God shows the utter impropriety of entering into a formal investigation of the lives of men; for all the secret thoughts and volitions of the mind are ever present with *Him* "with whom we have to do."

2*d*. *The doctrine of apportioning rewards and punishments at the morning of the resurrection for actions done in this life would, on the principle they are infinite and endless, destroy the supposition, that every one would receive his due.*

A prominent, because popular objection is commonly brought against the doctrine of a world's salvation, that it denies a just *retribution*, for the offences of the wicked. But in attempting to escape Scylla we ought to be careful that we do not run into Charybdis. Without laboring to show that the common notion of a *judgment* and future *punishment* would involve the whole world in wretchedness and wo, suffer me to introduce a case for the solution of this problem. A. has been a good man. He has studied to know his duty, and faithfully fulfilled the obligations resting on him; in his childhood he was filial and dutiful, in his youth he was unassuming, decorous and virtuous, in his manhood he has been the patriot, the good citizen, the conscientious man of business, the confident friend, the obliging neighbor, the affectionate husband, the tender father, and the humane philanthropist, but by some mishap, he gives a loose reign to indulgence in the latter age of his life, and he dies in ignominy, an unhappy castaway. *He is sentenced to eternal pain.* Where then, let me ask, is he rewarded for his virtues, and his acts of humanity and goodness? Not, surely in the spiritual world; for *there*, he but receives the punishment due for his dereliction from duty. And to say, that VIRTUE brings her own reward, and that he was recompensed on the earth, is but to abandon the idea of *future* rewards.

B. has been the reverse of A. All his life has been distinguished for deeds of profanity, cruelty, and all manner of wickedness, till at last he is incarcerated in a loathsome cell, under the sentence of death for treason against the government. He reflects on his past conduct. His enormous sins rise up in all their aggravation before him. He is thunderstruck. He stands astonished at himself. Death and eternity stare him in the face. He contemplates his situation in the presence of the sovereign of all worlds. He feels condemned—confounded. What can he do? The work has been done, it cannot be retrieved. He moans, he weeps, he sorrows in bitterness for his sins. What shall he, what can he do, to escape impending vengeance? He is assured that by confessing his sins in penitence, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, and sueing to God for mercy, he will obtain the forgiveness of his sins. This being done, he receives a passport to the joys of paradise, to smile in eternal youth, and bloom in glory unfading. Where let me inquire, is this iniquitous character *punished* for his gross violation of every principle of moral rectitude? It is evident he is not recompensed at the resurrection, or *future judgment*: And where does he receive his reward? Common opinion would say, his punishment was remitted—as much as to affirm, he escapes with impunity. Where is the propriety of alleging then, that every idle thought, and word, and action indulged in by men, shall be accounted for in the *judgment*; and that every one shall be rewarded in the unseen world for the deeds performed in this.

3*d*. *It is idle to suppose that this world is a state of probation, designed for forming characters for eternity.*

I am heartily sick of that monkish notion, that looks upon this world as useless, except as a kind of preparation scene for another mode of being. All sentient creation from the smallest insect that floats in the summer breeze, to the

intelligent creature man, that constitutes the link, binding the animal to spiritual existences, seem to be suitably adapted to their respective spheres of life, and properly qualified for the several stations assigned them; this is next to proof positive, that percipient beings were designed by the wise Architect of heaven and earth for this world, and the world for them. Hence we should here use and enjoy the same, as not abusing it. A conclusion arising from this mode of reasoning is, that as we were formed for the enjoyment of the world, and for abiding the consequences of human actions while in the world, therefore, if we be heirs of a coming existence, we shall be suited to *that world* in our constitutional nature; and *the world* to us. And if there be a retribution then, it will be for misdeeds committed *there*—each world belongs to itself, as distinct from another.

What are we to understand by *probation?* Much depends on this. I can hardly think that those who so earnestly contend for a *state of probation* seriously consider in what it consists. *Probation* implies *trial*, &c. To explain, permit an illustration. A merchant or an agriculturalist employs in his service a stranger as a laborer, at a certain stipulated sum for a given period of time: but not knowing his ability for performing the work assigned him, the employer enters into a *conditional* contract; *to wit*, that the *said* laborer shall enter into his employ on a month's *trial*, and if he proves faithful, and will answer his purpose, he shall be continued in his service, otherwise the connexion shall be dissolved, and the contract be made null and void. This season of *trial* is a *day of probation*. Apply the idea to God's administration. Is the omniscient ruler of the universe under the necessity of placing man on the earth, and continuing him in his service during his life in order to see whether he will answer the design for which he was created? The thought would be impious. It requires but little discernment to perceive that the employer above noticed would not have engaged the laborer in his service, had he been conscious that he would not have answered his purpose. And if God knew when he breathed into man the breath of life, whether he would be suitably qualified for the enjoyment of his presence or not, with what shadow of propriety should he place him in a state of trial for forming a character either for acceptance or rejection? Moreover, if the Almighty knew when he formed man, that he would prove unfit for his service, why did he create him under such circumstances, or with such a nature?

4. *The idea of a future judgment apportioning to each and every individual suitable rewards or punishments, presupposes that no rewards or punishments are inflicted in this life.*

It will be at once perceived, that if mankind are recompensed in this mode of being for their moral conduct, either in a greater or less degree, then in a *greater or less degree this life* is a state of *retribution*. Moreover, it would be palpably absurd, to suppose that mankind were to give an account in the *judgment of a future world* for *every* thought, and action, when they had rendered an account previously, for a part, and been punished accordingly. Beside, it would be an anomaly in jurisprudence, to administer rewards and punishments before the decision of the judge on the merit or demerit of actions had been rendered. Now, is it not a fact witnessed by our own experience and observation, and the united testimony of sacred and profane history, "that the righteous are recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner?" If there be no punishment inflicted in this life, what means the expression of Cain, when made a vagabond for his enormous crime, "my punishment is greater than I can bear?" What mean those temporal woes and calamities denounced and inflicted by the Almighty on the Antedeluvians, Sodomites, rebellious Israel, and other evil doers, for their transgressions? If man is to be rewarded or punished in the future world for his deeds performed here, why, as Ministers of God for good, are men appointed to execute judgment in the earth? Why are our prisons erected, and other means of punishment instituted? In establishing such a system of Government, we should hardly think the Legislature had the idea in view, that another world was the place of *retribution*.

5th. *The doctrine of a future judgment deciding the destinies of mankind according to merit or demerit, presupposes that eternal life is secured by works of righteousness; and not by grace.*

Nothing can be more self evident than that *eternal life*, if it be the gift of grace, is a blessing conferred irrespective of the actions of the creature, else work is no more work, nor grace any more grace. And again, if *eternal life* be conferred in consequence of any thing performed by the creature, then it comes of debt, and is but wages for the performance of certain duties. Now, as a *future judgment* according to the common acceptance of the phrase, fixes the destinies of man, according to their works, it shows conclusively, that salvation on this hypothesis is purchased by the righteousness of the creature—a doctrine directly opposed to the gospel of saving grace; revealed to man through Jesus Christ our Lord.

These are some of the reasons why we object to the doctrine of a *day of judgment in eternity*.

L. L. S.

Original.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATION.--NO. IV.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Ps. xxiii, 4.

In the rocky countries of the east, travellers are, and have always been, obliged to carry staves in their hands, both to support them in the slippery paths and uncertain footholds which they were constantly encountering, and to defend them against assaults from robbers, or ferocious beasts. Indeed, so indispensable in these countries was a staff, that any one about to set out on a journey, always provided himself with two or more staves, lest one should fail. To this custom the Psalmist alludes in the passage above. And how beautifully does it enable him to express his confidence in the power and goodness of the Almighty! "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy *rod* and thy *staff* they comfort me."

When the Apostles were sent out by the Savior to preach the gospel, he commanded them to take only *one* staff, clearly implying that the custom of taking more than one was common when a person was about to perform a journey.

The expression "valley of the shadow of death," was, probably, likewise borrowed from nature. The *Desert of Arabia* in which the Israelites sojourned after they departed from Egypt, is very often alluded to in the Holy Scriptures. Jeremiah speaking of it, (ii, 6,) says, "neither said they where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness; through a land of deserts *and of the shadow of death;* through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt?" Living as we do in a temperate climate, and in a rich and luxurious country we are but poorly qualified to conceive of the horrors experienced by a traveller crossing an almost interminable desert of burning sand, and destitute of water. "It is difficult to form a correct idea of a desert without having been in one; it is an endless plain of sand and stones, sometimes intermixed with mountains of all sizes and heights, without roads or shelter, without any sort of produce for food. Generally speaking there are few springs of water, some of them at the distance of four, six, and eight days' journey from one another, and not all of sweet water; on the contrary it is generally salt or bitter, and increases the thirst of him who drinks. But when the calamity happens, that the next well, which is so anxiously sought for, is found dry, the misery of such a situation cannot be well described. Many perish, *victims of the most horrible thirst*. It is then that the value of a cup of water is really felt. He that has a *zenzobia* of it is the richest of all. *What a situation for a man! He is dying for a cup of water—no one gives it him—he offers all he possesses—no one hears him—they are all dying*—though by walking a few miles farther they might be saved. If the camels are lying down, and cannot be made to rise—*no one has strength to walk*—only he that has a glass of that precious liquor lives to walk a mile farther and perhaps dies too. "Belzani's Travels. (See Horne's Intro. Vol. iii, p. 54.) Such a desert as this might well be called the land "of *the shadow of death*." "This expression," says Mr. Horne, "has exercised the ingenuity of commentators, whose opinions are recited by Mr. Harmer, (Observations, Vol. iv pp. 115, 116.) but the correctness of the prophetic description is confirmed by the existence of a similar desert in Persia. It is a tract of land broken into *deep ravines, destitute of water, and of dreariness without example*. The Persians have given to it the extraordinary but emphatic appellation of *Malek-el-Moatdereh*, or the *Valley of the Angel of Death*. (Morier's Second Journey, p. 168.") "At four hours' distance from the promontory of Carmel, keeping along the coast, Mr. Buckingham entered a dreary pass cut out of the rock, called, *Waad el Ajal*, literally, *the Valley of the Shadow of Death*. Here were the appearances of a gate having once closed it, as places for hinges were still visible; and while the centre was just broad enough to admit a wheeled carriage or loaded camel, there were on each side raised causeways hewn out of the rock, as if for benches of repose, or for foot passengers. (Buckingham's Travels, p. 122.) "See Horne, Vol. iii, p. 53.) With these facts before us, how sublime is the simile made use of by the Psalmist, "Though I walk through the *Valley of the Shadow of Death* I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy *rod* and thy *staff* they comfort me."

C. M. S.

THOUGHTS ON MAN.

"An heir of glory, a frail child of dust."

Nothing is more evident than the fact that mankind did not create themselves, but are indebted to some superior power for their existence and faculties. It is equally true that they had no control over the circumstances in which they should be placed, or the temptations to which they should be exposed. If they are made subject to vanity or corruption, this also is the work of that superior power to whom they owe their being and faculties.

Now unless we attribute to that superior powe either folly or malice, we cannot justly conclude that our subjection to vanity and corruption, and our liability to temptation and sin, was intended to work out our everlasting ruin. If that superior power be guided by consummate wisdom and actuated by supreme benevolence, we must, infer that this, as well as other arrangements in nature and providence, was designed for good; and that it will neither fail of the good intended, nor terminate in any evil which was not intended.

Doubtless the power of God is equal to the creation of intelligent beings in a state of angelic purity, without liability to temptation, or subjection to vanity. Why then should human infirmities be supposed capable of infinite wrath and vengeance? If God ordained human weak-

ness and subjection to vanity, if it was the dictate of his own choice and wisdom, how could those literal resentments which many people attribute to Almighty God, spring up in his mind? God cannot be disappointed, nor can any thing take place which he pleases to prevent. We see no just ground for surprise, resentment or vengeance, much less for *eternal* vengeance.

If we should suppose that mankind were made subject to vanity or corruption, without good intentions, they would have reason to be dissatisfied. They were never asked, whether they were willing to be subjected to vanity and temptation? Nor would they desire it if their wishes had been consulted. They actually need some benevolent view of God's purposes, in order to quiet their dissatisfaction, and remove discontent. Such a view St. Paul has given to the world in his epistle to the Romans. Here it is:

"The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Romans viii, 20, 21.

Reader, take notice, that the creature was made subject to vanity, "in hope." There has been much wondering, what the apostle could mean by the words "in hope." Very well, let the world wonder, let the Orthodox wonder, let all Limitarians wonder and be amazed. But know then that there is hope, that "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." If those wonderers were Universalists, they would cease to wonder.

Let proud, imperious men, who have little love for their fellows, and no patience with their weakness and vanity, go on, prejudging the judgment of God, and sentencing their brethren to hell. Let them shut their eyes on the solemn and affecting truth, that even in their infirmities, mankind are under "him who hath subjected them in hope." Let them guard their hearts as with "triple steel" against the sufferings and woes of their race. But let the wretched and disconsolate know, that human nature is destined to rise "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—*Christian Pilot.*

FROM THE TRUMPET.

THE LATEST.

The orthodox editors seem to have set themselves at work, to see which can publish the most extravagant falsehoods. We are absolutely unable to account for some of their conduct, except on this supposition. The following is one of the latest, which appeared originally in the Western Recorder, and has been republished by Dr. Ely and others:—

"A CONSISTENT UNIVERSALIST.—We recollect to have been present at the examination of a candidate, who during his relation, stated in substance the following details: Educated very young in the orthodox creed, he afterwards lived among the Universalists, fully imbibed their sentiments and gave himself up to various indulgences, with the view of enjoying a heaven both here and hereafter. In process of time he became tired of his earthly heaven, and thought it advisable to die and try the other. An enormous dose of laudnum taken for this purpose proved ineffectual; and a little time afterwards he removed into our section of the country. Once more he thought it advisable to exchange the present heaven for a better one. Not doubting of the issue, or fearing death, he settled up his accounts, procured two new pistols, and fitted them with cool deliberation, till he found they would not miss fire. Having next loaded them, and laid them aside for use, he sent for Mr. ——, and Mr.——, two Universalists, to stand by him, and bear witness to the world, that he died in the full faith of that creed, and with entire self-possession. The preachers, however, advised him to desist. He gave his reasons for dying, and going where he should forever be free from trouble. But they finally told him that there was after all, too much reason to fear that there might be a hell. 'Why, then, do you not preach so, and tell us of it?' said he. 'It would not do,' they replied, 'it will make people crazy.' Amidst the conversation he stepped into the hall, and, as he believes, with entire self-possession, aimed the two pistols at his head, and snapped them; when to his great astonishment, they both missed fire, and were afterwards taken from him. The strange result of such effects led him to salutary reflection. He saw in it the hand of Providence—thought upon his past conduct—began to fear that there might be a hell, and that at least there ought to be a place of eternal punishment for one so vile as he had been. He sought forgiveness through the blood of Jesus; determined to yield unconditionally to his disposal, and to serve him, whatever might be the result."

[Br. Whittemore claims the story bears every mark of falsehood—because the young man is represented as falling into sinful indulgences, as a consequence of, or as soon as he became a Universalist, when it is palpable that Universalism assures men, *the way of sin is hard*—that if he had, with "cool deliberation," determined to commit suicide, he would have sought some unfreqented place, instead of calling two clergymen, *to see him shoot himself!*"—that the two clergymen could not be Universalists, but hypocrites, as they believed in Limitarian doctrines, but would not preach them, through fear of making people crazy. He closes by saying, "there are so many marks of falsehood about this story, the best refutation is to publish it. Nobody that reads it will believe it; and if orthodox editors persist in publishing falsehoods so gross and extravagant, they must expect to lose their reputation for veracity, if it be not already gone."]

"SUBMISSION CHAIR."

The Albany Journal and Telegraph, a decided Limitarian paper, gives the following, which we believe is the *latest improvement* in the management of "Protracted meetings." Comment is unnecessary. The advice at the close is good and we should like to see it practised:

"A gentleman in this vicinity, every way entitled to full confidence, states, that at a protracted meeting which he attended a short time since in a western county of this state, after the person had occupied the anxious seat until he supposed himself converted, and was pronounced so, he was then required to sit in "the submissive chair," as it was called, while thanksgivings were offered, that a new soul had been born into the kingdom. Nothing can be more certain than that the "anxious seats" used in this manner, must almost of course, lead to self deception; and it is equally certain that "the submission chair," must serve to confirm it. It is indeed a great evil, that these measures serve to make intelligent worldly men regard the whole subject of revivals with disgust; but the greater evil, as we think, is that they are fitted in the best possible manner, to inspire false hopes. We must continue to protest, as we have always done, against the whole system; and though we have no doubt that the anxious seat is used by some with much less evil than by others, yet we believe there is evil connected with it almost of course; an evil too, which may be avoided without a sacrifice of the least advantage. Our earnest hope is that the churches in which these things have prevailed will throw away their anxious seats and submissive chairs, and be contented to conduct their revivals, if God is pleased thus to bless them, in a sober and scriptural manner."

IMPORTANT DECISION.

The Supreme Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania has decided that the claims of the Bishops, &c. of the Methodist Church to the Methodist meeting houses, on the ground that the property is secured to them by trust deeds, are illegal and invalid. The owners of the pews, who have paid their money, are entitled to control the house, notwithstanding the deeds running to the Bishop, &c. the latter never having paid a valuable consideration. All the Methodist meeting houses are built in this way and claimed as the property of the whole church in the hand of the Bishops.—*Chris. Intel.*

P. T. Barnum, Esq. Editor of the Herald of Freedom, whose condemnation and imprisonment we noticed in the 3d No. of the present vol. Messsenger, was liberated from prison on the 5th inst. the term of his sentence having expired. Extensive preparations had been previously made by the friends of civil and religious liberty in that section to commemorate his liberation in a special manner. At twelve o'clock precisely, an unusual large concourse of people, (supposed to be *Fifteen Hundred,*) assembled in and around the Court-House, and listened to a very spirited Oration by Br. T. Fisk of New-Haven. After the exercises, the company retired to G. Nichol's Hotel and partook of a dinner, at which a large number of toasts were drunk expressive of the feelings of the company, on the occasion. Mr. Barnum was then escorted to his home in Bethel, about two miles distant, in a carriage drawn by six horses. Forty horsemen and a Marshal bearing the national standard preceded the coach, and sixty carriages, with citizens, followed it. Mr. Barnum acknowledges the receipt of *five hundred and sixty four* subscribers within the term (60 days) of his imprisonment. Was this calculated upon by his prosecutors? We judge not. P.

ANOTHER VICTIM.

A correspondent at Dunham, N. Y. informs us, says the Herald of Freedom, that a gentleman in that town who was lately converted at a four days' meeting, put an end to his existence by cutting his throat on the 5th of Dec.

PLINY'S LETTER.

"Pliny to the emperor Trajan wisheth health and happines: It is my constant custom, Sir, to refer myself to you, in all matters concerning which I have any doubt. For who can better direct me where I hesitate, or instruct me where I am ignorant? I have never been present at any trials *of the Christians*, so that I know not well why, or how much they are punished or prosecuted. Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine whether any difference ought to be made on account of the age, or whether the treatment of the young and tender should be the same as that of the more robust; whether a pardon should be granted to those who recant, or whether to have ever been a Christian is sufficient ground of condemnation: whether the name itself, without criminal actions, is to be punished, or only when attended with crimes. In the mean time this has been my course with those who have been accused before me *as Christians*. I have interrogated them 'whether they were Christians?' If they confessed it, I interrogated them a second and a third time, and threatened them with death. If they persisted, I ordered them to execution. For I was clear that, whatever it were which they confessed, they ought to suffer for their contumacy and inflexible obstinacy. There were others of the same infatuation, whom, as Roman citizens, I have noted to be sent home to the city. In the mean time, the charge extending itself even during

these proceedings, more cases occurred. An anonymous list was sent me, containing the names of many, who upon examination, denied that they were or had been Christians; while at my direction they invoked the gods, and sacrificed with wine and incense before your image, which I had ordered to be set before them, with the statues of the deities. Besides which they reviled Christ. None of which things, it is said, the genuine Christians can be brought to do. These, therefore, I discharged. Others named by the informers, owned that they were Christians, and again denied it; alledged that they had been formerly, but had ceased to be, some three years ago, some longer, and a few above twenty years. They all did homage to your image, and the statues of the gods. They too reviled Christ. They maintained that the extent of their fault or their error was, that they were accustomed, on a stated day, to meet together before dawn, and to sing, by responses, a hymn to Christ as to a God; to bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of some crime, but to abstain from theft, robbery, adultery, unfaithfulness and fraud. When this was done, they separated, and again assembled to a meal which they ate in common, and without disorder, and that they had forborne this after my edict, in which as you commanded, I interdicted these assemblies, (*etairies.*) In consequence of these discoveries, I judged it the more necessary to extort the truth from two maid servants, called ministræ, even by the torture. But I discovered nothing besides a perverse and excessive superstition. Wherefore I have suspended my proceedings to consult you; as the thing appeared to merit deliberation, from the number of those involved. For many of all ages, of all ranks, and of either sex, are and will be accused. Not confined to the cities, this contagious superstition has spread into the villages and open country. It might, I think, be arrested. At least it is certain that the temples, which had been deserted, begin to be attended, and the customary rites, long interrupted, to be revived. The victims too are every where bought up, which but lately could scarce find a purchaser. From whence we may imagine what numbers (quæ turba hominum,) might be redeemed, could an indulgence be granted on recanting." This translation is varied considerably from that given by Lardner, vii, 291—3.

REV. THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE.

From Notes of a Traveller in England.

"A few days after, I walked to Islington to pay my respects to the Rev. Mr. Horne, whose "Introduction to the study of the Scriptures" has gained him so deserved a reputation among students in Theology. I found him in his little study, with piles of books occupying the table and floor in promiscuous confusion; and interrupted him in the midst of his preparation for the pulpit. It required but a few minutes to become acquainted with one so frank and communicative. I wished to draw from him some particulars relative to the compilation of his invaluable work, and turned the conversation that way. The "Introduction" was the product of twenty years' labor; the time devoted to it being often subtracted from the usual hours of repose, while his *daily* exertions were otherwise bestowed for his own immediate support, and that of his parents and their numerous family. The sale of the *first* edition left him about £30 out of pocket; the *second* yielded him about £150; and the *third* between £600 and £700. This is all the remuneration he has received for twenty years' intellectual labor! He did not receive a university education, his early life having been passed in the employ of booksellers; but this disadvantage was counterbalanced by his indefatigable industry and application to study. The publication of his work on Theology first recommended him to the notice of those in ecclesiastical authority, and was the means of his obtaining ordination at the age of thirty-eight, as well as a diploma from the University of Cambridge. Ever since his ordination he has been curate to the Rev. Mr. Crowther, of Christ Church, Newgate-street; a station, in which little more is required of him than to preach a Sermon every Sunday. Those, and many other particulars of his life, and literary labors, were communicated with great frankness and simplicity. The only regret he felt was his inability to purchase books—his library not exceeding two thousand Volumes, nine hundred of which were books of reference in the various ancient and modern languages.

As I proposed extending my walk to Stoke-Newington, about three miles farther, he took his hat, and we sat off together over gravel walks leading through the fields. Our visit was intended for the venerable Rector of the church; but as he chanced not to be at home, we left our cards, and returned by a different route. As we passed Newington-green, my companion pointed out the small brick building in which Dr. Watts officiated for some years, while he resided in the Abney family. It was scarcely capable of accommodating two hundred persons. To a remark, that he had been desired to go as a missionary to the Cape of Good Hope, I replied, that he was serving the cause of religion more effectually by his pen. He said that his *forte*, if he had any, lay in that; yet, were he unencumbered with a family, he might think it his duty to go. The prominent characteristics of this man are frankness, ardor and liveliness of disposition, a love of piety wherever it is found, and great simplicity of manners. His moderation has secured him the esteem of all parties. An Arminian in doctrine, his attachment to the established forms of worship and church government is immoveable, though without one particle of bitterness."

TRE FUTURE.

[We extract the following from an article in the last N. York Weekly Messenger, "ON THE REASONABLENESS OF A HOPE IN A FUTURE STATE OF EXISTENCE---Read before a society of young men." The writer aims to show the advantages of Christian Faith, over universal skepticism. With some few exceptions we are pleased with the article entire. We agree with the writer, that if a belief in a future state "be but a dream---'tis not only a pleasant but a happy one"---provided, THAT EXISTENCE SHOULD BE ONE OF JOY AND PLEASURE. Otherwise we know not why every feeling of humanity should not lead us to hope and pray for that "ceaseless slumber," which knows not the waking horrors of the "chained criminal" in the similitude below. Change, for a moment, the application. "Can the son commit to the tomb his aged parent," and rest satisfied in believing that parent is to live in ceaseless torture, and for eternity too? "Can the mother gaze upon the child she has watched from infancy" with all the intensity of a mother's feeling, and freely give it up as a "companion of devils?" No, no. Well may we exclaim in the bare contemplation of such scenes, "how cold and insufficient seem our creeds! !"] P.

* * * * * Is it *reasonable* to suppose that when the world shall have closed upon us, none other will be ready to receive us? Can we believe that when this short and fleeting life, shall have passed away—when the brain shall have ceased to think, and the heart to beat—when the last look is given, and the last sigh drawn—when all shall have ceased to exist, and returned to mother earth—that we have ended our journey, and in the grave we shall sleep forever? Or is it not more reasonable to suppose that the immortal soul, enclosed in that body, has winged its flight to Him that made it—again to exist, freed from the vices with which on earth it was clogg'd!

* * * * * *

When the friend we have loved, whose life seemd to be linked with our own, lies a corpse before us—when that eye which so lately sparkled with eloquence, is closed in death, and that heart, ever kind and generous, has ceased to beat, and that voice, which we have listened to with such delight, is hushed forever—if we have no hope to meet again, what shall console us for the loss? Can Time's lenient hand soften our grief, or assuage our sorrows? No! If we have indeed loved that friend, how terrible will be the blow! But if we have a hope of a re-union after death, we can gaze tranquilly on those features, and support with becoming fortitude, the unavoidable though melancholy event. We may exclaim when buoyant with youth and spirits,

> "Enough on earth for me to love,
> I need no other world—"

but when death has taken from us our dearest friends, how cold, and insufficient seems our creeds! Can the son consign to the tomb his aged parent, whom he loves with such devotedness, and believe he is lost to him forever? Mother! can you gaze upon the child whom you have watched from infancy with such care—to preserve whom you would have given all else you possessed—when the agony is over, and it has ceased to exist, and not believe that in spirit ye shall meet again?

No love can be purer or stronger, than that which exists between husband and wife; they whom no sordid motive has joined; whose affections wealth cannot purchase; whose love no reverse of fortune can cool. Can *they* cherish a creed thus heartless? A creed, which must embitter their happiest hours, and tinge with sorrow, their lightest and gayest moments! It would indeed seem impossible that even *one* should be found to cherish such a belief—a belief that levels man with the brute. Am I told that this belief in a future state, may be but a dream—pleasant indeed, but yet a dream, and that we should discard all dreams, and look to realities; I reply, *if it is* a dream, 'tis not only a pleasant, but a happy one; a dream that alone can render tolerable the sorrows and troubles of life. It is true that dreams often produce disappointment. The Exile dreams of home; he has crossed the ocean; he is within sight of his home, where resides his wife and children; he enters unseen; they are lamenting his absence and anticipating his return; his heart is full; he can listen no longer; and in a moment, he is fast locked in their embrace. He awakes to behold the falsity of his dream! and to know he is yet an exile—a poor unhappy exile!

The sailor, too, dreams of home. His aged parents, his beloved wife, alike are objects of his love. He too is happy. No longer is he the creature of the winds and waves, but the remainder of the voyage of life, will be spent in comfort and ease. He awakes, the ship has struck! there is no hope of escape! and as he sinks in the ocean, his dream of happiness flashes across his brain, and embitters the last moments of life. The criminal dreams of a pardon; his chains are loosed; he is free; he breathes again the pure air of heaven, and wanders at liberty over the earth; he has changed his course; he is a virtuous and happy man! He awakes! his chains are fast locked; he is bowed down with guilt, and the bell that announces his execution is tolling. How false was his dream also! But if the hope of a hereafter *be* a dream, it is one from which the slumberer never awakes. No disappointment attends his dream! Through life he has experienced its beneficent influence, and in death he shall sleep as undisturbed as the sceptic!

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK, AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1832.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Orchard-Street Church, near Broome.

A funeral sermon may be expected to-morrow, (30th inst.) afternoon, occasioned by the death of Mrs. Alethia, wife of Capt. Mason, and daughter of Capt. E. Packard.

The Sunday Evening Lecture for to-morrow, is deferred one week. In its stead will be delivered a discourse on the pleasures and advantages arising from Sacred Music. Text, Ps. cxxxv, 3.

☞ I have understood that many persons in this city (Philadelphia,) decline subscribing for the "Messenger," being fearful of a failure in the receipt of the numbers. To allay all apprehension on this subject, I remark, 1st. That the "Messenger" has been published more than a year, and I have, I believe without an exception, received each number on the day of publication. 2d. I have entire confidence in the punctuality of the Publisher, and do hereby guarantee to the subscribers by me obtained, the fulfilment of his contract, so far as they are concerned, and so long as I continue an assistant editor of the work. My residence is 132 Chesnut-street. A. C. T.

CONCERT OF SACRED MUSIC.

At the Orchard-street Church, near Broome.

A Concert of Sacred Music will take place at the Orchard-street Church, on Thursday evening next, Jan. 3d. It was first noticed for last Thursday evening, 27th inst. but was unavoidably postponed to next Thursday evening. A part of our last impression was worked off, before the postponement was known to us.

It is needless for us to urge attention to this public performance of the Choir. The pleasure which the congregation have repeatedly derived even from their ordinary exercises we doubt not will insure a full attendance.

Leader of the Choir, Mr. E. Willmarth.

Organist, Mr. W. S. Bassford.

Tickets 50 cts. to be had at this office; at the Music Store of Mr. E. Riley, Chatham-st.; at Willmarth's, corner of Chatham and Mulberry; at Mr. S. Hammond's Library, 418 Grand-street; at Bourne's, and at the Bookstore of E. Bliss, Broadway; and at the Shakespeare Hotel.

THE PROSPECT.

We should be ungrateful indeed, did we not indulge the warmest feelings of gratitude towards many of our patrons in the city, who have recently given us such strong testimony of their interest in behalf of the Messenger. It was commenced, as is well known, under many discouraging circumstances—we persevered under every difficulty, fearing much, and expecting little through the first volume; or at least until we could give some certificate to community of its general character and punctuality. It has now been continued better than a year, with a regularity in its business part, we are warranted in saying, at least equal to most publications of the day, and it is a source of the highest gratification to our feelings that its general character has been so warmly approved of.

Within the first three weeks of the present month we received an accession to our list, from the city alone, of about *seventy names*. And from abroad, within the same time, better than *one hundred*. We are indebted to *twelve* individuals for between *forty* and *fifty* of the seventy names in the city. We here state it, and with pleasure too, to show what a little exertion can effect, and although the establishment is not yet beyond the reach of want, with such feeling towards it, and such exertions in its behalf, we have perfect confidence that it will not be long in assuming a *safe* and *permanent* standing among our periodicals. We doubt not these exertions will be continued until the object is accomplished.

The unqualified expression of feelings in favor of the paper, at the recent public meetings, is a sure pledge to its conductors that it has not been entirely destitute of interest and usefulness—that their labors have not been wholly in vain. The character and extent of these meetings are a sure pledge, also, that our cause in this city is assuming an aspect of which we need to feel proud—of which we may reasonably expect much. Our female friends and young men, in particular, are deserving of especial praise for the interest manifested. We are young ourselves, and it is a source of no slight gratification (in the great work of moral reformation and intellectual emancipation,) to be associated with those who are not only the present pride of community, but must be looked up to as its future pillars and support—we mean *Young Men*. We rejoice to see them stand forth as the Lord's freemen, successfully removing and destroying every webb that bigotry and fanaticism would weave around them. In the language of the very excellent address given by one of their number, on the evening of the 11th inst. we would say, "'stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free'—heed not the epithet of *Infidel*, so bountifully lavished upon you by those claiming all evangelical piety, and every shaft shall fall harmless at your feet.'"

To our Editorial brethren who have so kindly noticed our work, through its various stages, we owe much. If we have neglected thus far a public expression of our feelings, they may be assured we have not been the less grateful, and they will now accept, one and all, our warmest thanks. P.

FRIENDLY LETTERS,

To the Partialist Clergy—NO. VI.

Men and Brethren—Many of you have frequently asserted from the pulpit, in private circles, and from the press, that Universalism was first preached in the garden of Eden—that it is the doctrine of the devil—and that they who proclaim and defend the eventual salvation of all, are *bona fide* the agents of the prince of darkness.

I am loth to believe you so ignorant of the doctrine of Universalism as to be really sincere in alledging the serpent as its origin—yet I will not sit in judgment on your motives, nor call in question your sincerity. I choose rather to present a few thoughts on the subject, hoping you may thus be brought to see the error of your ways, and repent you of the evil.

1. You frequently declare that Universalism is a "*new* doctrine," a "new frangled system," &c. Obviously you must either give up this declaration, or cease asserting that Universalism was first preached in the garden of Eden.

2. By what process of reasoning have you convinced yourselves, that a doctrine which teaches the eventual destruction of the devil and all his works, is the doctrine of the serpent? It would seem more reasonable to suppose, that they who contend for the endless continuance of the kingdom of darkness and of the prince of evil, preach the doctrine of the devil—a doctrine in which his satanic majesty must take infinite delight!

3. Beside: it is difficult to perceive how the doctrine of the devil can furnish matter of fervent and perpetual supplication to the throne of grace. Yet you pray for the salvation of all—that is, according to your own showing, you pray for the doctrine of the devil! You thereby deprecate the truth of the doctrine you profess to believe and endeavor to defend! If you believe endless misery to be the doctrine of the Bible, and of the God of the Bible, you certainly should pray that it may prove true—for praying thus, you might pray in faith, without doubting, according to the apostolic exhortation.

Leaving you to meditate seriously on these things at your leisure, I pass to inquire what the main features were, of the doctrine preached to Eve.

And 1st. The serpent persuaded the woman that she should enjoy more present happiness in transgressing than in keeping the law of God. Is this Universalism? It is not. Universalists have ever contended, and do still maintain, that there can be no true enjoyment except in obeying the divine commandments. Many of you teach a contrary sentiment. You speak much of the "pleasures of sin"—and you frequently predicate the doctrine of future retribution on the assertion that, in *this* world, the wicked suffer less, and enjoy more, than the righteous. Do you not thus preach the doctrine of the devil?

2d. The serpent also persuaded the woman, that if she transgressed, the punishment threatened would not *surely* be inflicted. "Ye shall not *surely* die." Is this Universalism? It is not. Universalists have ever contended, and do still maintain, that punishment for every sin is *certain* and *inevitable*. You teach a different sentiment. You say to the sinner, "You shall not *surely* die"—you may repent, and thus escape all pubishment. You open a way for the entire escape of the transgressor from the chastisement he justly deserves. In thus doing, do you not preach the doctrine of the devil?

3d. Moreover, Universalists say to the sinner, "*In the day* thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." But you affirm that the day of judgment is not the day of transgression—that we are here on trial, to be judged hereafter. Whoever contradicts God, is of the devil. In putting afar the evil day, do you not preach the doctrine of the devil?

Men and Brethren—the people are beginning to *reason* on religious subjects. The more enlightened of your own adherents are beginning

to suspect that in making the assertion in discussion you evince a little of the serpent's guile. It would be well, therefore, for you to pause and reflect. Look well to your goings. Inform your people that Universalism teaches the total destruction of the devil and of all his works. Cease praying for Universalism until you can pray in faith. Teach the sinner that he cannot be happy in sin—teach him that there is no escape from merited chastisement; teach him moreover, that he will be condemned and punished in the very day, the very act of transgression. Preach to him and to all, "the goodness of God" as the foundation of repentance. In so doing you will promote the prosperity of Bible truth, win the sinner from the error of his ways, encourage the virtuous in well-doing, receive the approbation of your consciences, and be enabled in faith to rejoice in the Lord.

A. C. T.

THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

Thou unrelenting Past!
Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,
And fetters, sure and fast,
Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.
Bryant.

The close of the year is at hand. How imperceptibly has time stolen away. A few alternations of sorrow and joy, a few smiles and a few tears, and lo, a twelve month is gone! It is but a little while since we heard the greetings of a *Happy New-Year*, and again they are at our very doors.

There is a kind of melancholy pleasure in turning back to the all-devouring past. If it has swallowed up many of our joys, it has also buried in its lethean bosom many of our sorrows. Its tide has swept away things most loved on earth, and yet it affords us something like pleasure to call them up one by one again and think of what they were and how we once enjoyed them.

Man appears to be constituted for eternity. Even while he is the subject of time, he lives as well in the *past* and *future* as in the *present*. He makes all subservient to his happiness and sometimes to his improvement. From the varied scenes of the past he culls what affords him at least temporary pleasure. To the hopes of the future he looks for incitement and courage. From the past he learns the lessons of experience which shall temper his zeal and cool his ardor for the future; and both alike tend to fit him for the duties and disappointments of the present hour.

The year now closing has been to many of us a season of unusual vicissitude and alarm, and to some of mourning and grief. Death, our watchful and busy foe, has in uncommon forms of terror, been stalking in our midst. One and another of our friends have fallen, and almost every one now feels the pang arising from the severed ties of friendship or love. The hour of dread however is now over, and like other gone-by things, is remembered only in the shadowy forms of the past. All its sternness and terror perhaps we never can, and God grant we never may, feel again. The year now past has notwithstanding furnished many incitements to gratitude. The Sovereign Arbiter has in judgment remembered mercy; and if he has withholden some blessings and inflicted some stripes, he has still been "kind to the unthankful and to the evil." May we learn from its lessons of the divine goodness and severity to offer up that most suitable prayer of the Psalmist, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

To Universalists the past year has been a season of rejoicing. Success almost unprecedented has attended their exertions to disseminate the doctrines of their religion. The christian community is cultivating more and more the mild and benevolent spirit of Universalism, and consequently is becoming better and better prepared to receive and rejoice in its truths. The dark and forbidding dogmas of popular faith cannot forever hold the christian world in their thraldom. As year after year steals away, something of the form and more of the spirit of religion as it came down from the barbarism of the dark ages, is and will be lost. Christianity will regain its proper place in the hearts of mankind, and love once more triumph, as in the days of the apostles, over the darkest and basest passions of our nature.

Proffering to our readers the salutations of the season, we renewedly pledge our poor exertions for their edification and improvement. May truth spread—and virtue flourish---and love be diffused, till they become universal. S.

THE GREAT SALVATION.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Hebrews ii, 3.

1. The "great salvation" here spoken of, is, in my estimation, a salvation from sin, and from the fear that hath torment. Jesus was manifested to "save his people *from their sins*"—to take "away *the sin* of the world"—to "redeem us *from all iniquity*"—to turn every one "*from his iniquities*"—to "deliver them who all their life time were subject to bondage through fear of death"—to infuse into the soul that "perfect love" which "casteth out fear," &c. Ignorance is the cause of unbelief, and deception of sin. Let the mind be enlightened into a knowledge of the truth—let it be distinctly understood and sincerely realized, that the duty and interest of man are always identified, and the soul will be saved from sin and from tormenting fear.

2. This present deliverance is termed a "*great* salvation." Many there are who seem to think that a present salvation is of little importance, if it be true, as Universalists affirm, that the immortal blessedness of all has been guaranteed by the promise of Him who cannot lie. Such persons reason much better on other matters. If they are afflicted with a painful disease, they are desirous of being immediately delivered therefrom—and they would term such deliverance a wonderful cure—a *great* salvation. But why so? Would that disease harm them in the grave, or in a future life? Assuredly not. Now sin is a moral disease—and we are justified in considering a present deliverance therefrom a "*great salvation.*" Suppose the Partialist could for an hour forget the doctrine of a future existence. How would he reason on the subject before us? Obviously, just as he would reason in relation to a loathsome bodily disease—and he would consider a present deliverance from sin a matter of much importance, even a "*great* salvation."

3. This "great salvation" may be *neglected*. To the general neglect thereof, must be attributed much of the suffering mankind endure. But to what causes must that general neglect be attributed? To the following:—1st. The supposition that the "great salvation" is of little importance in the days of youth and vigor; 2d. The doctrine of the serpent, which teaches that there is 'pleasure in sin;' and 3d. The idea that just punishment may be avoided by a timely repentance. This triune error has led thousands astray, having induced them to neglect the salvation from sin, to which the apostle refers.

4. Proceeding farther, we discover that the general inquiry of mankind appears to be, (not how shall we become the possessors of this great salvation? but, having neglected it,) "how shall we escape" the punishment we justly deserve? "How shall we escape" damnation? The wisdom of the world has devised certain means to accomplish the desired object—but God "will by *no means* clear the guilty." Many declare that Jesus came to suffer the punishment due to the sinner. We might affirm, with equal propriety, that he came to enjoy the rewards deserved by the virtuous. He certainly "*suffered* for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God"—but we are no where certified that he was *punished* in our room and stead.

5. The objector may say, that the text speaks of an *escape*. True—but let the passage be properly emphasized, and the folly of expecting to escape *merited punishment* will be obvious. The text is usually read thus:—"How shall we *escape*, if we *neglect* so great salvation?" Read it differently: "How shall *we* escape, if *we* neglect," &c. The context opens the subject more fully—"For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and *every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;* how shall *we* escape, if *we* neglect so great salvation?"

6. Let it be duly noticed, that the persons cited as examples, had neglected the instructions with which they had been favored. The apostle lays it down as an indisputable, an acknowledged fact, that *they* did not escape—that *they* did receive, or had "received a just recompense of reward." He then asks the question, "How shall *we* escape?"—thus affirming, interrogatively, the impossibility of escaping from the just demerit of sin. Be it observed, moreover, that "every transgression RECEIVED a just recompense of reward." Of course, that "*just recompense*" was *limited* in duration. A. C. T.

EXISTENCE OF DEITY.

That there is a God, is a truth, which with few exceptions is universally believed. The high and the low, the wise and the unwise, the savage and the civilized, here, if nowhere else, agree. So abundant are the proofs of his existence, that the world without, and the greater and more marvellous world within us, can be regarded as little less than volumes of clear, convincing and eternal testimony to its truth. While the heavens and the earth remain, and man continues as he now is, a thinking and rational being, the invisible things of Jehovah, even his eternal power and Godhead, may be clearly seen being understood by the things that are made.

That nature discovers all of the divine attributes in their perfection—that it presents the character of the Deity in all its beauty and excellence, is not true, and would if it were, obviate the necessity of a revelation. But still there is manifested in the works of creation, even in the little things of our earth, indeed in our own mysterious being, a wisdom and power and goodness far transcending what we behold of these qualities in man. There is enough, we contend within and around us to convince the most sceptical, that all the glories of the upper world, and the wonders discovered here on earth—that the order and beauty and harmony in nature, was not the result of blind fortuity, but the production of a being at once powerful and wise.

Throughout the universe, or at least as far as human observation can extend, we observe a striking display of wisdom in the wonderful adaptation of part to part, of one thing to another. If the sun was made to emit light, the eye was as evidently made to enjoy it, and profit by it. And so nice is this adaptation, that had the sun been to any considerable degree, larger or smaller than it now is, or had there been only a slight change in the conformation of the eye, we must either have groped our way through life in obscurity, or suffered excruciating pain under the overpowering splendor of his glorious course. If animal nature was created subject to hunger and thirst, the gushing fountain and rejoicing field were also prepared to meet its every want.

We trace this wise adaptation in matters of the most trifling and the most important character. We behold it alike in the nature and circumstances of a fly and an elephant—in the

little flower that blossoms in the morning and fades at noonday and the whole visible world. We see it no less in our spiritual than in our physical nature.

Now we ask on what principle this apparently universal law can be accounted for if not on the intelligence and wisdom of the Creator? Is not contrivance clearly discovered in this adaptation? But contrivance supposes a contriver. Deny the existence of the contriver and you are left to account for manifest displays of wisdom where there is no intelligence. Deny the existence of God and there are ten thousand difficulties to be surmounted for which human wisdom is altogether inadequate. S.

PLUTARCH,

We are informed, was indebted to the Stoics for the belief of a particular Providence; but he could not enter into their idea of future rewards and punishments. He knew not how to reconcile the present agency of the Supreme Being with his judicial character hereafter.

Little more than simply to state the difficulty is required, to convince the reasoning mind that Plutarch was right. Do we allow that the very hairs of our head are numbered, and yet deny that Deity takes present cognizance of our actions, and administers immediate rewards and punishments? The plainest principles of justice forbid that a man should be judged and punished before the conclusion of his trial; and if it be true that this is simply a probationary state of being, wherein is discoverable the justice of the rewards received by the virtuous and the punishments suffered by the vicious? I am persuaded, with Plutarch, that the admitted present agency of the Supreme Being, cannot be reconciled with his judicial character hereafter.

Men, we know, are judged in the flesh. Either God has, or has not an agency in the matter. If it be contended that he has not, what evidence have we that he has a present agency in any thing? But if God does judge in the earth, I have no evidence that he will hereafter sit in judgment on the same offence.

Let mankind remember, that under the administration of moral laws, rewards and punishments are *consequential*, and of course *certain*—that the law of cause and effect exists as well in the moral world as in the natural. Let it be remembered, that, while the virtuous man is satisfied from himself, wrath, tribulation, and anguish must *of necessity* be upon the soul of every man that doeth evil. A. C. T.

PLINY'S LETTER.

On another page may be seen a translation of the celebrated letter of the younger Pliny to the Emperor Trajan, by whom he had been appointed pro-consul of Pontus and Bithynia. This letter was written between A. D. 102 and 111. The writer was not a christian, as will be readily seen by his letter, and therefore his testinony to matters of fact in relation to the spread of this religion, and the treatment its believers suffered, is unquestionable. The letter is interesting to all readers, but especially valuable to the theological student. The original may be found Plinii Epis. lib. x, ep. 97. The translation is by Professor Everett, and may be seen in his "Defence of Christianity against the work of George B. English, A. M." pp. 298, 299. note. S.

ANOTHER LABORER.

A young man by the name of *Samuel C. Bulkley*, who has been studying for a short time with Br. Smith, of Hartford, commenced his public labors in the ministry, at Woodbridge, Ct. on Sunday 16th inst. Br. B. passed through this city on his way to Hightstown, N. J. last week.

ASSERTION NOT ARGUMENT.

A worthy brother in Cairo, Green Co. writes us as follows, under date of Dec. 9. We are inclined to think the Rev. gentleman in question would find it much easier to *make* assertions than *prove* them:—

"Our Limitarian friends are again making the most desperate efforts to roll back the tide of Universalism. The Presbyterians had a four days' or ——— *meeting*, week before last, but did not (as I have heard) make a single convert. The Methodists have (within three weeks) preached four sermons against our doctrine, with the like success. The Rev. Mr. Ostrander (Methodist preacher) delivered a discourse last Sabbath, 2d inst. on the subject of endless misery, from Matt. xxv, 46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment," &c. in which he said that the word rendered "everlasting" and "eternal," although sometimes used in a limited sense, did originally signify "endless," and that in the text it was used to express "*endless duration*," that the time spoken of was the final judgment of the world, that the word "*these*" referred to the wicked portion of mankind, who must of course go into *endless punishment*, and defied all the upholders of the doctrine of Universalism to prove the contrary.

On Tuesday, the 5th. I wrote him a note, making proposals for a public discussion of the subject, and promising him an opponent worthy to contend with. The next day I received a reply, declining the proposal, and giving his objections, one or two of which, for their singularity, I will give you. He objected that "such debates were attended by *rag-tag* and *bob-tail*, the *drunken*, *profligate* and *profane*, with no other object than sport and merriment;" and that "it was beneath the dignity of a gospel minister to enter the arena on such occasions;" and concluded by saying that he would pursue his own way, and I might mine." S. L. H.

MONTHLY SERMONS.

We have just received No. 2, for November, of the course of Monthly Sermons, now publishing by Br. Sperry, of Hartford, Conn. The Sermon of this number is from the pen of Br. L. R. Paige, of Cambridgeport, Mass. Text, i Tim. ii, 8. These Sermons are published on the 15th of every month, at the office of the Religious Inquirer, Hartford, Conn. Each No. contains one Sermon of 8 pages. The yearly subscription of one Dollar procures 96 Sermons, and in the same ratio for any greater number. Subscriptions in all cases in advance. P.

MARRIED,

On Christmas Eve, by the Rev. T. J. Sawyer, Mr. Edward S. Lovett, of New-York city, and Miss Sarah Travers, of Peekskill.

DIED,

On the morning of the 22d inst. Mrs. Alethia, wife of Capt. Mason, and daughter of Capt. E. Packard, aged 24 years.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We acknowledge the receipt, from a friend in New Brunswick, of a correspondence between a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, and a Universalist. Its extreme length prevents an immediate examination. We shall give it as early attention as possible, and dispose of it as the interests of Truth may seem to us to dictate.

We also acknowledge the receipt of a proof impression of an article designed as we suppose for the first number of the "Expositor," comprising some interesting statistics of the Universalist denomination. It will be noticed in our next.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES,

Received at this Office, ending Dec. 26th.

S. L. H. and F. P. O. Cairo, 2d vol. each $2; G. R. South Durham, 2d vol. $2; Rev. T. W. Boston; W. B. D. Warwick, 2d vol. $1; P. M. Holmesville; A. D. Preston, 2d vol. $2; Dr. H. R. Westerly, 2d vol. $2; R. B. M. Baltimore, 2d vol. $2; M. B. Norwalk, 2d vol. $2; P. M. Bridgeport.

TRAVELLING AGENT.

We have pleasure in stating that Br. S. J. Hillyer is now travelling on an agency for this Paper, in collecting, and procuring subscribers. He designs visiting the principle places within a convenient distance of this city, during the winter. Any facilties our friends in different places can afford him will be thankfully acknowledged.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

The Church now nearly completed in Annsville, West Chester Co. will be opened for public worship on Sunday, Dec. 30th inst. Brs. Hillyer and Hallock, it is expected, will be present. Services to commence at half past ten in the morning. Sermon by Br. B. B. Hallock.

Br. S. J. Hillyer will preach at Peekskill, Saturday evening, Dec. 29; at Cold Spring, Monday evening, Dec. 31; at Beekman, Tuesday evening, Jan. 1st, and at such other places in the vicinity, evenings, during the remainder of the week, as may be convenient; at Poughkeeepsie, Sunday Jan. 6th.

PUBLIC MEETING.

A public meeting of Universalists will be held in the Lecture Room of the Orchard-st. Church on Wednesday evening next, Jan. 2d at half past 6 o'clock. Ladies are respectfully invited to attend.

NEW BOOKS.

Union; or a treatise of the consanguinity and affinity between Christ and his Church, by James Relly.

Strictures on select passages of Dr. Clark's Commentary, and particularly a Review of his comment on Matt. xxv, 46, by J. L. E. W. Shecut, Charleston, S. C.

Ballou's Lecture Sermons—do. Select do.

View of the Elementary principles of Education—Outlines of Phrenology—Catechism of the Natural Laws of Man, all by the late G. Spurzheim, M. D.

The celebrated FOX SERMON, by Rev. H. Ballou.

Just received and for sale at the Messenger office, 85 1-2 Bowery.

UNIVERSALIST BOOKS.

The following Universalist Books are kept constantly for sale at the Messenger office, 85 1-2 Bowery, N. York.

Christian Messenger, Volume I. bound, 2 dolls.

Ancient History of Universalism, from the age of the apostles to the Reformation. Price $1,20.

Modern History of Universalism, from the Reformation to the present time. Price $1,20.

Ballou's Works. Treatise on Atonement, 75 cents Notes on the Parables 75. Sermons on Important Doctrinal Subjects, 37 1-2.

Smith on Divine Government, showing that God foreordained human events, and is conducting all things, to produce the Universal Happiness of man. An English work, 75 cents.

Notes and Illustrations of the Parables, by Thomas Whittemore. In this work all the New Testament Parables are explained at length. 62 1-2 cents,

Winchester's Dialogues, a highly useful and instructive work, in which the objections to Universalism, particularly those founded on the words everlasting, forever, &c. are fully and triumphantly answered. 75.

Petitpierre on Divine Goodness, 50 cents. An excellent work on Universalism, originally published in French.

Pickering's Lectures, in defence of Divine Revelation With a Likeness of the Author. 75 cents.

Streeters Universalist Hymn Book, different qualities and prices, 60 cents to $1,75.

Morse's Reply to Parker's Lectures on Universalism, price 31 cents.

FROM THE LADIES MAGAZINE.

CHRISTMAS HYMN.

Welcome, welcome, glorious morning
Welcome, brightest day of earth!
Welcome, radiant sky, adorning
Sun of Righteousness! thy birth.

Rise and shine o'er ev'ry nation,
With increasing lustre shine,
Till each soul shall see salvation,
In thy rays of light divine.

Heavenly Father! let thy glory
Shine around us while we sing;
Let all voices tell the story—
Heaven with hallelujahs ring.

Make each heart o'erflow with gladness,
While we hail this joyful day;
Let thy Spirit banish sadness,
Chase the clouds of sin away.

Travel glorious star, before us!
Guide us to our Savior's feet;
Shed thy holy lustre o'er us,
While before his throne we meet.

There, with grateful love, adoring,
Sweet let our first offering be:
Contrite hearts thy grace imploring,
Are *most precious*, Lord to thee.

GOOD OLD CUSTOMS.

It is an old Dutch custom to call and exchange good wishes on the first day in the year, not only with present friends, but those between whom and the visitor there had been any coldness or misunderstanding. It is a custom worthy the age of Saturn. He who can sit down by his fire on the last night of the year, and look back as he must on the track of his personal feelings, and remember the offence he has given and taken—both perhaps unforgiven—and not wish, in his calm blood and ebbing resentment, that his enemy were there to sit down with him and exchange pleasant regrets, and renew the old and familiar intercourse, must step on the threshold of the new year with little hope and less prospect of coming happiness. And it is not the express differences we have had with our friends and neighbors—not the most aggravated provocations, which come up the thickest and are the most difficult to forgive. It is the cold look, the inattentive courtesy, the forgotten respect, the slighted opportunity of kindness, the doubtful and unresentable injury—the thousand touches which our pride and self-interest get in the unavoidable hurry and press of the thronging world. These fester when a deep wound heals. It is not less a magnanimous duty, still to array them all at the year's close and calmly dismiss them. And it is no less a pleasure than the forgiving a great wrong—for they cumber sadly the timid feet of content, and starting up namelessly in the heart at the call of its perpetual associations, trouble its peace continually. Why should not the affections be reckoned with like duties? Why should they not waste and become disordered, like them, if not watchfully overlooked? Once a year, at least, we should inquire whom and how much we love and hate, and whether these more responsible treasures than gold and silver, are fitly lavished or withheld. The dutiful affections, most of all, need careful vigilance. They are deeply rooted, and we feel secure of them, for they were planted by nature. But in the busy forgetfulness of care or pleasure, they are often suffered to be overgrown and slighted. An assiduous natural affection is as rare as a perfect chrysolite. And it is as precious—for what on earth sinks so deeply into the heart, as the ready, delicate, anticipating love of a son or a brother? It would be a well spent hour between two years that should be devoted to dispassionate reckoning with the daily and familiar feelings. The passions will take care of their own, for though called generous and warm, they exact too nice a return not to enlist the most wakeful selfishness in their service. But of these silent-working and accustomed ministers to our love within us, we are often far too secure. They and all our preferences and aversions should be jealously kept upright and free from unworthy mixture, and if there is a time of all others fitted for the recurrence of such vigilance, it is this.

The custom of presenting gifts at this season, springs from the same natural feeling. There is a warmth of heart belonging to the season itself which is universal, and this is one of its promptings. How could the year be better begun than by adding a new link to friendship? To children particularly, the new year's holidays are sources of the most benevolent and genial feelings. Nothing is so cheaply bought as the love of a child and few things are so delightful. An inconsiderable gift pleasantly presented, gives you a lasting place in the memory of a human being in one of its most beautiful stages.—*N. Y. Mirror.*

INFANCY.—An Extract.

What is more beautiful than an infant? Look at its spotless brow: at its soft and ruddy lips, which have never uttered an unholy word—and at its blue laughing eye, as it lays on the breast of its fond mother. Look, it has stretched out its white hand, and is playfully twisting her hair around its tiny fingers. Aye, let me look at an infant! it is innocence endued with life: the very counterpart of holiness. It requires nothing but the pleasant look of its mother, and her warm kiss upon its lilly cheek, to make it happy. You may talk to it of sorrow, of misery, of death, but your words are unmeaning. It has never felt the chills of disappointment; it has never writhed beneath the pang of affliction, and its guiltless heart knows nothing of the emptiness, the hollow professions, and cold heartedness of the world; and would to God, that the cup may be broken ere it be lifted to its lips.

A cold-blooded systematic villian cannot easily gaze upon an infant's countenance; he shrinks before its mild blue eye, like a criminal before a Judge's. But why does he start and turn away, as if he looked upon a dungeon's visage? Because it is the mirror of innocence; because it is so free from pollution, so pure, so perfect, that it mirrors the guilt and hideous blackness of his soul, as clearly as the limpid waters give back the figure that is bending over them.

Our blessings on infancy! yes, we never gaze upon its meekness and beauty, without having disagreeable thoughts mingled with our pleasant ones; 'Days to come' press upon us, when its puny limbs have put on the firmness of manhood, and the simplicity of its countenance is supplanted with soberness and thoughtfulness. It may be that he will then go amidst the people, to utter the unalterable decrees of Jehovah; it may be that he will stand amid the carnage of battle, where the 'conflict's smoke' rises like a pillar to the sky, and the valliant are falling like leaves before the winds of Autumn; or, it may be that he will become linked with scenes of revelry; visit the haunts of vice, of sordidness and prostitution, and at last go to an ignominious grave. * * *—*Middlesex Tel.*

BIOGRAPHY.

The importance of biography, as a medium of public instruction, appears to be generally admitted. Curiosity, a principle of active and extended influence, ever in quest of gratification, cannot too early be supplied with interesting and instructive objects, by an acquaintance with which intellectual attainments, and moral improvement, may be happily promoted. To render biography conducive to these ends, it is obviously necessary, that genuine and attainable excellence of character be carefully attended to in the selection of subjects, as the exhibition of spurious morality, or unattainable perfection, must necessarily defeat the moral effect of the most alluring narrative. Excellence of character, arising from a great variety of causes, must be estimated chiefly by its moral influence; and it is principally under this view that the enlightened biographer will choose to portray the subjects of his history. As genuine religion forms the basis of public morality, as well as of private virtue, it is certain that national prosperity and individual happiness must be wholly indebted for their maturity to such an association. To expect elevation of character, either national or individual, upon any other principle, is to seek (in the expressive language of the highest authority) to "gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles."—*Mackenzie.*

DEAN'S LECTURES.

Just published, Ten Lectures in defence of the final restoration of all men to holiness and happiness, by Rev Paul Dean, of Boston. The course consists of ten lectures arranged in the following order:

In Lecture I, the question to be discussed is stated, accompanied with suitable remarks on its importance. In Lecture II, the objection to the final restoration on the ground of *election*, is examined and answered. Lecture III, is devoted to examining the *conditions or terms* of salvation. Lecture IV. considers the duration of punishment. Lecture V. examines the objection to the final restoration on the ground of its licentious tendency. Lecture VI. is devoted to presenting the proofs of the final restoration drawn from the character and attributes of Deity. Lecture VII. presents proofs of the final restoration drawn from the mission, works, and death of Christ. Lecture VIII. presents proofs of the final restoration, drawn from the *plain promises* of God Lecture IX presents proofs of the final restoration drawn from the nature and tendency of christian morality. Lecture X. exhibits proofs of the final restoration drawn from the nature of man, and the scriptural descriptions of future happiness.

Just received and for sale at this office. Price 37 1-2 cents. Dec. 8, 1832.

Prospectus for the Second Volume of the

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,

Devoted to the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence, the defence of Liberal Principles, generally, in Religion, and miscellaneous reading, of chaste and moral tendency.

The first Volume of the Messenger, closed on the 27th ult. The Second commenced Nov. 3d.

In presenting proposals for the 2d Vol. few observations will be necessary in explanation of its objects, and those few cannot, perhaps, be better expressed than in the language of the prospectus for the first volume. "Its primary design is to 'plead the cause' of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians, (the Universalists)—to illustrate and enforce their principles, and defend firmly, though as far as possible, with christian candor, their doctrine from the opprobrium which even professing christians endeavor, too readily, to fasten upon it; and in thus defending its own, it will advocate the civil and religious rights of all. Professing a sentiment which recognizes the Almighty as our common Father, and mankind as brethren indeed, it can know no exclusive privileges. Whatever it may ask for itself, it asks for ALL.'"

Terms.—The Messenger is published every Saturday, at 85 1-2 Bowery, on a royal sheet, quarto form, close print, at *Two Dollars* per annum, in advance, or *Two Dollars* and *Fifty Cents* if not paid within six months from time of subscribing. Letters to be addressed, post paid, "P. Price, 85 1-2 Bowery, New-York."

P. PRICE, Publisher.

☞ All letters and communications relating to this paper, must be addressed "P. Price, No. 85½ Bowery New-York."

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